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ABSTRACT

This analysis of a survey of state directors of special education concerning special education outcomes highlights the following findings: (1) more students with disabilities are participating in statewide testing and states are better at documenting actual numbers participating; (2) high stakes attached to school or district performance and lack of exposure of students with disabilities to test content are factors that inhibit greater participation of students with disabilities; (3) most states are in the process of developing alternate assessments; (4) test results are used primarily for guiding statewide policy decisions, decisions to reform schools, and decisions about individual students; (5) strategies used most often by states to meet the assessment provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 1997 (IDEA) are training and the dissemination of written policies; (6) state special education involvement in standards-based reform is highest for practices directly related to students with disabilities, such as aggregating results of alternate assessments with general assessment results; (7) lack of resources and inadequate assessments are seen as the greatest barriers to obtaining educational accountability information on students with disabilities; and (8) best practice information continues to lead the list of preferred technical assistance. Extensive data tables are included. Appendices provide additional information on state efforts to meet IDEA assessment requirements and standards-based reform activities. (DB)

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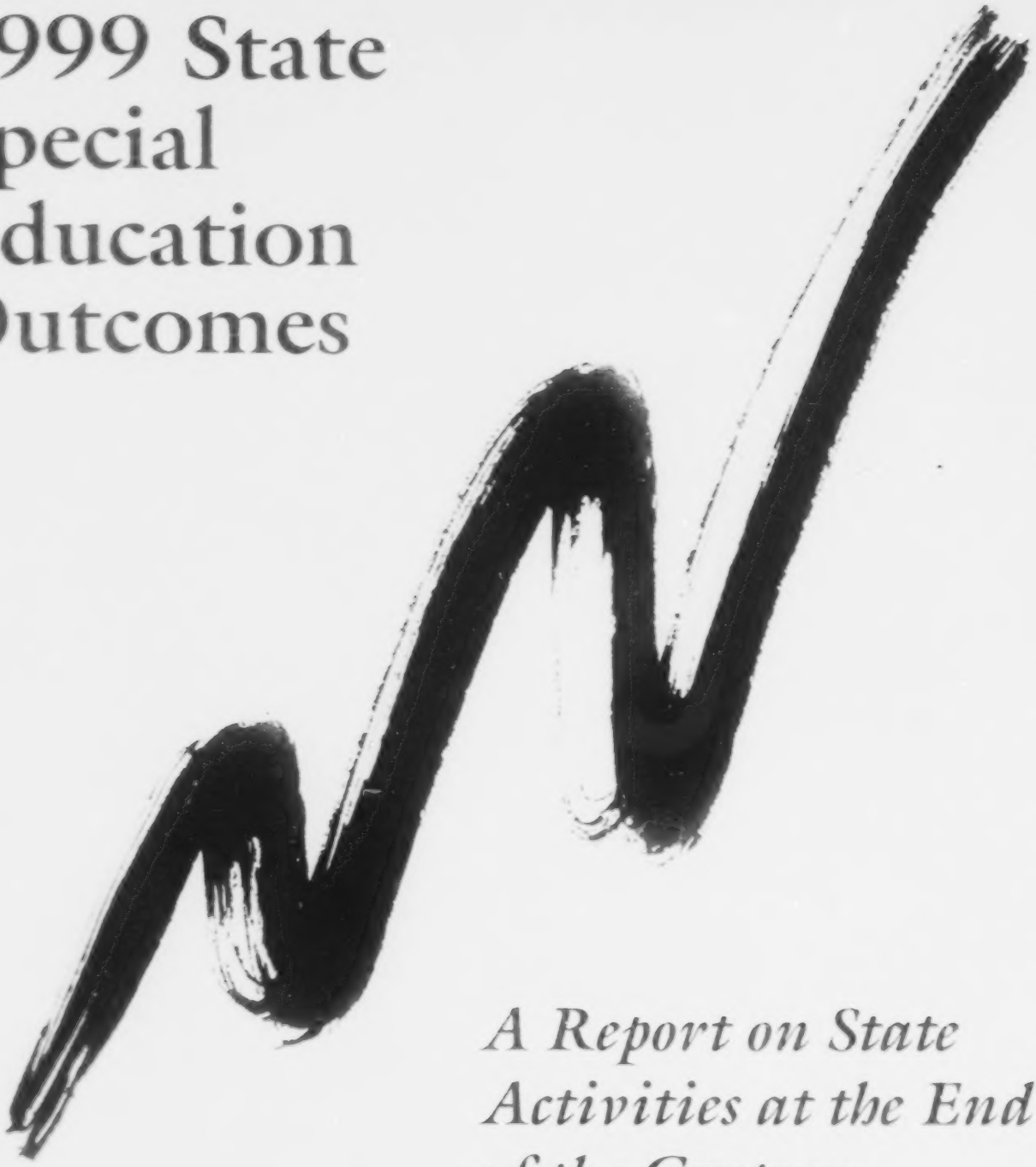

A Report on State Activities at the End of the Century

NATIONAL CENTER ON EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

In collaboration with:
Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)
National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE)

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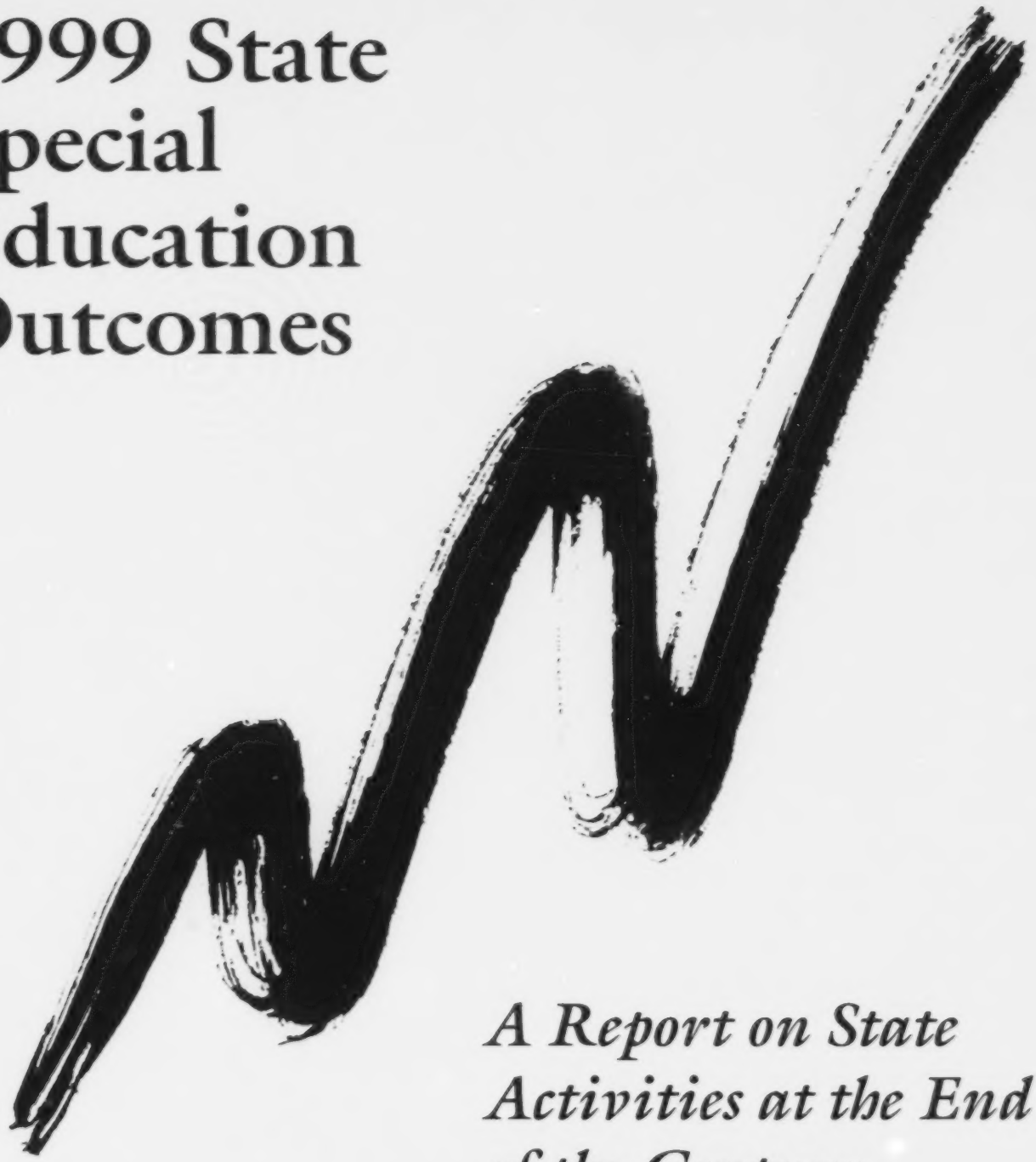

A Report on State Activities at the End of the Century

NATIONAL CENTER ON EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

In collaboration with:
Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)
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- **Goal 1**: Students with disabilities will be a part of nationally-initiated educational reforms.
- **Goal 2**: Students with disabilities will be a part of each state's standards-based educational reform efforts.
- **Goal 3**: Students with disabilities will be included in national educational data collection efforts.
- **Goal 4**: Students with disabilities will be included in national and state level reporting of educational outcomes, with results that can be disaggregated.

Many NCEO activities promote these goals. In addition to its national survey, NCEO is working with its partners to provide needed information and support to state education agencies seeking to include students with disabilities in their efforts to provide better educational outcomes to *all* students.

The Center is affiliated with the Institute on Community Integration at the College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota. It is supported through a cooperative agreement (#H159C50004) with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. Opinions or points of view expressed within this document do not necessarily represent those of the Department or the Offices within it.

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State Special Education Outcomes 1999 was prepared by Sandra Thompson and Martha Thurlow, with support from research assistant Stacy Callender.

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These were the state directors of special education in May 1999 when the survey was conducted.

Executive Summary

THE 1999 NATIONAL SURVEY OF STATE DIRECTORS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION IS THE seventh in a series of surveys that have been conducted by NCEO since 1991. This year's findings include:

- More students with disabilities are participating in statewide testing, and states are better at documenting actual numbers participating. Still, only 23 states actually provided participation data. The variability in participation and accommodation rates is striking, but these differences may reflect differences in definitions.
- High stakes attached to school or district performance and lack of exposure of students with disabilities to test content are factors that inhibit greater participation of students with disabilities in assessment systems.
- Most states are in the process of developing their alternate assessments. Expected rates of students unable to participate in regular assessments varies considerably in the 29 states ready to make predictions, implying that there will also be large variations in alternate assessment participation rates.
- Test results are used primarily for guiding statewide policy decisions, decisions to reform schools, and decisions about individual students. Yet, about one-third of states use the results in informal ways, often as a result of parent and community pressure.
- Strategies used most often by states to meet the assessment provisions of IDEA are training and the dissemination of written policies. Greatest needs for training involve clarifying how student goals are aligned with state standards, and defining performance standards for students with disabilities.
- State special education involvement in standards-based reform is highest for practices directly related to students with disabilities, such as aggregating results of alternate assessments with general assessment results. There is little involvement when the inclusion of students with disabilities is seen as detrimental, such as when there are rewards and sanctions for accountability results.
- Lack of resources and inadequate assessments are seen as the greatest barriers to obtaining educational accountability information on students with disabilities.
- Best practice information continues to lead the list of preferred technical assistance, but the desire for obtaining information from the Internet has soared since 1997.

These findings highlight the current status of students with disabilities at the end of a century marked by dramatic changes in measuring the outcomes of education for students with disabilities. The findings reinforce the need to continue to survey state directors of special education about the status of state special education outcomes.

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Overview of 1999 Survey

THE NATIONAL CENTER ON EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES HAS BEEN SURVEYING STATE directors of special education about efforts to include students with disabilities in education reform since 1991. At that time, most state directors of special education were just beginning to think about how students with disabilities fit into emerging educational reforms. Little did anyone realize the incredible magnitude of education reform efforts that would take place over the next eight years, at local, state, and national levels.

This last survey of the century marks the incredible changes that have occurred since the first survey in 1991.

In 1997 the reauthorization of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (*IDEA*) sparked educational reform in special education. As a result of changes in the Act, educational results for students receiving special education services now must be as public as they are for other students. This means that states must define performance goals and indicators for themselves, and one of the indicators must be the performance of students with disabilities on state and district assessments. Students with disabilities must be included in state and district assessments, with accommodations as appropriate, or in an alternate assessment when they are not able to participate in the general assessment. Their performance on these measures is to be reported in the same way and with the same frequency as the performance of other students is reported.

IDEA 97 is not an isolated law. Its push for educational accountability is evident in other laws as well. The *Improving America's Schools Act*, for example, requires that the performance of students with disabilities be disaggregated so that Title I reforms can be targeted toward the needs of these students as well as toward the needs of other students. Other laws, such as *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* and the *School to Work Opportunities Act* also solidify the push to recognize that students with disabilities are part of the educational system and that states and districts must be accountable for their learning as well. All in all, there has been a clear directive that the public needs to know, and has a right to know, about the performance of students receiving special education services.

As we produce this first report since the 1997 reauthorization of IDEA, we look at the key elements contained in IDEA. Yet, we also attempt to understand the pressures and barriers that affect state activities during this period of change. We give states the opportunity to report on the planning, development, and implementation of their accountability systems. And, we once again gather information on technical assistance needs so that states can better move forward in their efforts to meet the mandates of educational reform and at the same time do what is best for the children served by special education programs.

The 1999 Special Education Outcomes survey focuses on the implications of educational reform within the context of the 1997 reauthorization of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*. Results are presented in six sections:

- Participation of Students with Disabilities in Statewide Testing
- State Activities in Developing Alternate Assessments
- Reporting and Using Assessment Results
- Individualized Education Programs and Assessments
- Standards-based Reform
- Current Issues and Technical Assistance Needs

Participants in the 1999 survey included state directors of special education from all 50 states and 11 unique states that abide by the provisions of IDEA. Responses to the survey were gathered on-line for the first time, or by fax or mail for those without Internet access. Some state directors designated other state officials to complete the survey, and some surveys were completed by multiple respondents, including state assessment personnel. Once compiled, drafts of tables were sent to state directors for verification. Several directors made changes in their responses and faxed them back to NCEO. Overall, responses were obtained from 48 of the 50 states and from the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Eleven Unique States
American Samoa
Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
Department of Defense
District of Columbia
Guam
Mariana Islands
Marshall Islands
Micronesia
Palau
Puerto Rico
U.S. Virgin Islands

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The Context of Reform

TABLE 1 DISPLAYS THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, AGES 6 TO 17 YEARS, served under the provisions of IDEA during the 1996-97 school year (see third column). It also shows in the last column what percentages these totals represent when compared to the total estimated resident population of students 6-17 years old (from second column). State special education populations differ in their proportion to the overall student populations because of a variety of factors, including differences among states in their eligibility requirements for receiving special education services.

State special education populations differ in their proportion to the overall student population.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage of State Student Populations Receiving Special Education Services for the 1996-97 School Year

Name of State	Estimated Resident Population for Children (Ages 6-17) [1]	Number of Children Served Under IDEA (Ages 6-17) [2]	Percent of All Children Served Under IDEA (Ages 6-17) [3]
Alabama	719,328	84,406	11.73%
Alaska	123,975	15,056	12.14%
Arizona	738,684	68,403	9.26%
Arkansas	447,838	45,050	10.06%
California	5,548,936	505,936	9.12%
Colorado	671,575	61,146	9.10%
Connecticut	527,690	69,883	13.24%
Delaware	115,806	13,190	11.39%
Florida	2,262,861	293,033	12.51%
Georgia	1,287,524	122,307	9.50%
Hawaii	196,244	14,965	7.63%
Idaho	239,941	21,213	8.84%
Illinois	2,054,925	228,834	11.14%
Indiana	1,005,325	119,308	11.87%
Iowa	499,544	58,943	11.80%
Kansas	470,136	46,744	9.94%
Kentucky	656,613	66,902	10.19%
Louisiana	837,677	78,554	9.38%
Maine	212,162	27,838	13.12%
Maryland	848,851	91,017	10.72%
Massachusetts	945,688	136,577	14.44%
Michigan	1,720,585	165,784	9.64%
Minnesota	863,512	86,191	9.98%
Mississippi	510,179	56,585	11.09%
Missouri	949,395	111,331	11.73%

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Table 1. Frequency and Percentage of State Student Populations Receiving Special Education Services for the 1996-97 School Year (continued)

Name of State	Estimated Resident Population for Children (Ages 6-17) [1]	Number of Children Served Under IDEA (Ages 6-17) [2]	Percent of All Children Served Under IDEA (Ages 6-17) [3]
Montana	165,074	16,086	9.74%
Nebraska	305,230	35,120	11.51%
Nevada	268,132	25,761	9.61%
New Hampshire	203,891	22,845	11.20%
New Jersey	1,293,988	176,576	13.65%
New Mexico	336,994	42,524	12.62%
New York	2,938,973	339,892	11.56%
North Carolina	1,212,477	132,295	10.91%
North Dakota	118,783	10,967	9.23%
Ohio	1,929,434	195,556	10.14%
Oklahoma	604,777	65,206	10.78%
Oregon	552,251	55,759	10.10%
Pennsylvania	1,969,268	183,471	9.32%
Rhode Island	158,229	22,810	14.42%
South Carolina	628,881	77,098	12.26%
South Dakota	142,091	12,268	8.63%
Tennessee	882,139	109,041	12.36%
Texas	3,552,482	405,491	11.41%
Utah	453,896	46,673	10.28%
Vermont	103,207	10,034	9.72%
Virginia	1,081,618	125,065	11.56%
Washington	969,424	90,630	9.35%
West Virginia	292,704	39,943	13.65%
Wisconsin	934,624	91,385	9.78%
Wyoming	95,323	10,797	11.33%

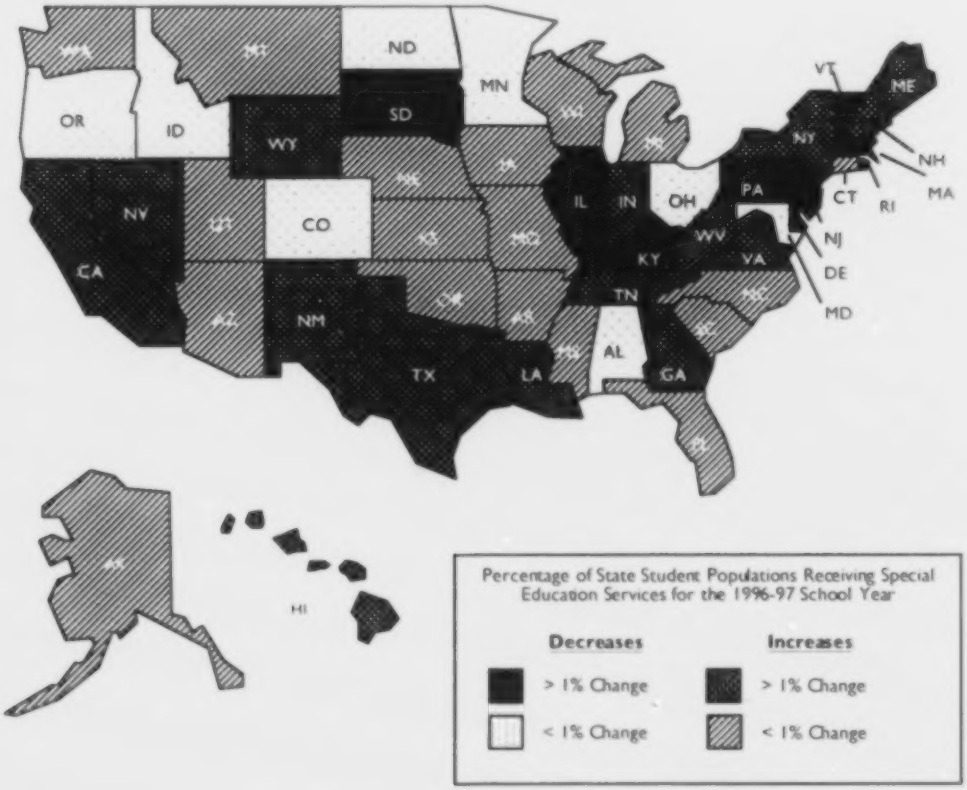
[1] Data taken from Table AF4 published in *Twentieth Annual Report to Congress* (U.S. Department of Education, 1998).

[2] Data taken from Table AA1 published in *Twentieth Annual Report to Congress* (U.S. Department of Education, 1998).

[3] Data taken from Table AA10 published in *Twentieth Annual Report to Congress* (U.S. Department of Education, 1998).

Figure 1 shows changes in populations of students receiving special education services from 1990 to 1997. While there has been an increase in 34 states and a decrease in 16 states, the percentages of change are generally quite small. Thus, special education populations continue to show tremendous variations from one state to another, but changes over time are relatively small.

Figure 1. Change in Percentage of Students Receiving Special Education Services from 1990 to 1999



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Participation of Students with Disabilities in Statewide Testing

Participation of students with disabilities in assessments continues to be a focus of the survey, and is now supported by special education law.

THE EXTENT TO WHICH STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ARE PARTICIPATING IN STATEWIDE testing has increased and also become more measurable since NCEO began asking states to provide data on student participation in assessments. Participation data previously were largely inaccessible or unavailable to most state directors of special education. The 1995 NCEO survey noted that few state directors knew whether test scores for students with disabilities could be disaggregated from assessment databases. Even when the data were available, most states had not attempted to disaggregate data on students with disabilities.

This year, NCEO again asked for data on the participation of students with disabilities in state assessments. As in the 1997 report, state directors were asked to indicate whether the following kinds of data are available for one or more of their statewide assessments:

- Number of students receiving special education services tested.
- Number of students receiving special education services excluded or exempted from testing.
- Percentage of test takers who received special education services.
- Percentage of all students receiving special education services at the grade or age level tested who were actually assessed.

The responses of individual states are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Primary Participation Data Available

	Measure of Participation Rate Collected or Received by Special Education Unit				
Regular States	Number of Students with Disabilities Tested	Number of Students with Disabilities Exempted or Excluded	Percent of All Test Takers Who Were Students with Disabilities	Percent of All Students with Disabilities at the Grade(s) Being Tested Who Were Actually Assessed	Do Not Collect or Receive Any of These Data
Alabama	■			■	
Alaska					*
Arizona	■	■		■	
Arkansas	■	■			
California	■	■	■	■	
Colorado					*
Connecticut	■	■	■	■	
Delaware	■	■	■	■	
Florida	■	■		■	
Georgia	■		■	■	
Hawai	■		■	■	
Idaho	■	■		■	

Table 2. Primary Participation Data Available (continued)

	Measure of Participation Rate Collected or Received by Special Education Unit				
Regular States	Number of Students with Disabilities Tested	Number of Students with Disabilities Exempted or Excluded	Percent of All Test Takers Who Were Students with Disabilities	Percent of All Students with Disabilities at the Grade(s) Being Tested Who Were Actually Assessed	Do Not Collect or Receive Any of These Data
Illinois					*
Indiana	■				
Iowa	■		■		
Kansas	■	■	■	■	
Kentucky	■	■		■	
Louisiana	■		■		
Maine					*
Maryland	■	■	■	■	
Massachusetts	■	■	■	■	
Michigan	■		■		
Minnesota	■		■	■	
Mississippi	■	■	■		
Missouri	■	■	■	■	
Montana	■	■			
Nebraska					■
Nevada	■	■	■	■	
New Hampshire	■	■	■	■	
New Jersey	■	■	■	■	
New Mexico	■		■		
New York	■	■	■	■	
North Carolina	■				
North Dakota	■				
Ohio	■	■		■	
Oklahoma	■	■		■	
Oregon	■	■	■		
Pennsylvania	■		■	■	
Rhode Island	■	■	■	■	
South Carolina	■		■	■	
South Dakota	■	■			
Tennessee	■	■	■	■	
Texas	■	■	■	■	
Utah	■	■	■		
Vermont	■	■	■	■	
Virginia	■	■			
Washington	■	■		■	
West Virginia	■	■	■	■	
Wisconsin	■	■		■	
Wyoming	■	■	■	■	
Unique States					
American Samoa					*
Bureau of Indian Affairs					*
Mariana Islands					*
Department of Defense					*
District of Columbia					*
Micronesia					*
Guam					*
Marshall Islands					*
Palau					*
Puerto Rico					*
U.S. Virgin Islands					*
Totals	45	32	29	31	16

* No response

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A total of 45 states indicated that they have data on the number of students with disabilities tested. This information is required by the 1997 amendments to IDEA. Five regular states and all unique states appeared not to have information on the number of students with disabilities tested. One of these states (Nebraska) does not administer statewide tests, so it would not be expected to have data on the number of students taking the state assessment. The four other regular states without an indication that they had participation data either had not responded to this item (Alaska, Colorado) or they had not responded to the survey (Illinois, Maine).

Several states also collect or receive participation data in other ways than simply the number tested. Approximately equal numbers of states, but not necessarily the same ones, have data on exemptions or exclusions, and percentage information.

Some students are recognized as having disabilities under another federal law—Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Data on 504 students participating in testing and other types of participation data are available somewhat sporadically among the states (see Table 3). For example, data on how many 504 students participate in testing are available in just 18 states, and other kinds of participation data are available in 12 states. These other data include the number of students using testing accommodations.

Table 3. 504 Participation Data and Other Participation Data Available

Regular States	504 Plans	Other Measures of Participation	Description of Other Data
Alabama	■	■	"Other" not defined
Alaska*			
Arizona			
Arkansas			
California			
Colorado*			
Connecticut			
Delaware			
Florida	■	■	"Other" not defined
Georgia	■		
Hawaii			
Idaho			
Illinois*			
Indiana	■	■	Number of students receiving accommodations
Iowa			
Kansas			
Kentucky	■	■	Types of accommodations, number testing with and without accommodations, number participating in alternate portfolio
Louisiana	■		
Maine*			
Maryland	■	■	Number of students/types of accommodations, number of students alternately assessed
Massachusetts		■	Pre-test files, post-test files, results
Michigan	■		

Table 3. 504 Participation Data and Other Participation Data Available (continued)

Regular States	504 Plans	Other Measures of Participation	Description of Other Data
Minnesota	■		
Mississippi			
Missouri	■		
Montana			
Nebraska			
Nevada	■		
New Hampshire		■	Number of students with limited English proficiency
New Jersey	■		
New Mexico		■	Number of special education test takers with and without modifications
New York		■	Disaggregate results for students receiving consultant teacher, resource room, or related services, and results for students receiving special class services
North Carolina*			
North Dakota	■		
Ohio		■	Information presented by 4-6-9-10-12 grades and by proficiency area
Oklahoma			
Oregon			
Pennsylvania			
Rhode Island	■		
South Carolina	■		
South Dakota	■	■	Number of students participating with accommodations
Tennessee			
Texas		■	"Other" not defined
Utah			
Vermont	■		
Virginia			
Washington			
West Virginia			
Wisconsin			
Wyoming	■		
Unique States*			
American Samoa			
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Department of Defense			
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Micronesia			
Palau			
Puerto Rico			
U.S. Virgin Islands			
Totals	18	12	

* No response

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State directors also were asked *how* participation rates were calculated in their most recent statewide assessment. Of the 31 states whose directors had reported that the state calculated test participation rates for students receiving special education services, 10 indicated that the calculations were completed at the local level by having schools turn in all of their test forms, including those for students who were not tested. Participation is calculated by dividing the number of completed test forms by the total number of test forms (including those that are blank). Most of the remaining states (14 of 21) divide the number of test takers by the state/federal child count that is reported December 1. Other states gave answers that did not indicate which calculation method they used. States have found distinct advantages and disadvantages with each of these models, as shown in Table 4. Interestingly, a few additional states indicated how they would calculate these rates even though they had indicated they did not do so. These states were fairly evenly split between those using local counts and those using state/federal child count data.

Table 4. Advantages and Disadvantages of Counting Students Locally on Test Day Versus Using the Federal Child Count

	Count students locally on test day	Use federal child count
Advantages	Do not have to worry about inaccuracies resulting from time between enrollment count and test.	Numbers are used to determine state and federal funding, so underreporting is unlikely.
Disadvantages	Count may be inaccurate due to errors by local test administrators. Some students are unaccounted for – they are eligible for testing, but are not tested.	Several months may pass between child count and test, leaving room for error due to students entering and leaving school system. Child count is generally reported by student age, not grade (tests are given by grade, not age).

State directors reported encountering a variety of difficulties in the calculation of test participation rates of students receiving special education services. Only two state directors reported having no problems calculating these participation rates. Other states reported four primary challenges:

- Data currently are collected on students with disabilities by age and not by grade placement (15 states).
- Total number of students is determined by number of test forms turned in and may over-exclude students—test scores are not connected to demographic data about individual students at the state level (9 states).
- Coding test forms so students with disabilities could be identified and disaggregated is difficult (8 states).
- State enrollment is calculated in the fall and tests are given in the spring, causing discrepancies due to student movement in and out of school/state, and changes in student eligibility status.

Each year, NCEO asks states to provide actual participation frequency data for the most recent assessment for which data are available. In the past, most states have been able to provide only estimates of the participation of students with disabilities in state assessments. In 1997, prior to the reauthorization of IDEA, 15 states provided actual participation numbers. In 1999, 23 states provided these data, but the states were not necessarily the same ones. The states providing participation data in 1999 are listed in Table 5, along with those states that provided data in 1997.

More students with disabilities are participating in statewide testing and states are better at documenting actual numbers participating. Still, only 23 states provided participation data.

Table 5. States with Data on the Number of Students with Disabilities Participating in State Assessments

1997	1999
Connecticut	Connecticut
Delaware	Florida
Florida	Georgia
Hawaii	Indiana
Kansas	Kansas
Louisiana	Kentucky
Maryland	Maryland
Missouri	Massachusetts
New York	Minnesota
North Dakota	Missouri
Oregon	Nevada
Rhode Island	New York
South Carolina	Ohio
Texas	Oklahoma
Wisconsin	Pennsylvania
	Rhode Island
	South Dakota
	Tennessee
	Texas
	Vermont
	Washington
	West Virginia
	Wisconsin

Although the federal requirement is for states to report the number of students with disabilities participating in state and district assessments, percentages are most useful for policymakers evaluating the inclusiveness of assessment programs. Using state-provided numbers of students participating in assessments and child count data, participation rates were calculated for specific administrations of state tests. These estimated rates are contained in Table 6. Rates of participation vary from less than one-fourth of students with disabilities to all students with disabilities.

Table 6. Percent of Students Receiving Special Education Services Who Participated in State Assessments*

State	Assessment/ Subject Area	Elementary Grades (K-5)	Middle School Grades (6-8)	High School Grades (9-12)
Connecticut	CT Mastery Test (Reading, Math, Writing)	44% (Gr 3)	43% (Gr 6) 43% (Gr 8)	
	CT Academic Performance Test (Interdisciplinary)			27% (Gr 10)
Florida	FL Writing Assessment	81% (Gr 4)	75% (Gr 8)	52% (Gr 10)
	FCAT (Reading)	80% (Gr 4)	71% (Gr 8)	50% (Gr 10)
	FCAT (Math)	81% (Gr 5)	72% (Gr 8)	50% (Gr 10)
Georgia	GHSGT (Lang Arts, Math, Science, So Studies, Writing)			51% (Gr 11)
	GKAP (Literacy, Math, Social/Emotional)	50% (Kdg)		
	Iowa Test of Basic Skills	53% (Gr 3) 60% (Gr 5)	62% (Gr 8)	
	Writing Assessments	44% (Gr 3) 53% (Gr 5)	64% (Gr 8)	54% (Gr 11)
Indiana	Statewide Assessment Math	51% (Gr 3)	76% (Gr 6) 81% (Gr 8)	78% (Gr10)
	English/Language Arts	51% (Gr 3)	76% (Gr 6) 81% (Gr 8)	78% (Gr 10)
Kansas	KS Assessment Program – Math	65% (Gr 4)	69% (Gr 7)	59% (Gr 10)
	Reading	57% (Gr 3)	67% (Gr 7)	54% (Gr 10)
	Writing	63% (Gr 5)	63% (Gr 7)	54% (Gr 10)
Kentucky	Kentucky Core Content Test	100% (Gr 4) 100% (Gr 5)	100% (Gr 7) 100% (Gr 8)	100% (Gr 10) 100% (Gr 11) 100% (Gr 12)
Maryland	Functional Testing Program (Citizenship, Math, Reading, Writing)		95% (Gr 8)	
	MSPAP (Writing, Science, Social Studies, Reading, Language Usage, Math)	95% (Gr 3) 95% (Gr 5)	95% (Gr 8)	
Massachusetts	Iowa Test of Basic Skills – Reading	98% (Gr 3)		
	Comprehensive Assessment System	94% (Gr 4)	93% (Gr 8)	91% (Gr 10)
Minnesota	Basic Standards Tests (Reading, Math)		89% (Gr 8)	
	Comprehensive Assessments (Reading, Math, Writing)	84% (Gr 3) 83% (Gr 5)		
Missouri	MMAT (Math, Language Arts, Science, Social Studies)	60% (Gr 3) 65% (Gr 5)		
	MAP Math	82% (Gr 4)	82% (Gr 8)	65% (Gr 10)
	MAP Communication Arts	60% (Gr 3)	65% (Gr 7)	42% (Gr 11)
	MAP Science	59% (Gr 3)	64% (Gr 7)	45% (Gr 10)
Nevada	Terra Nova Complete Battery	83% (Gr 4)	88% (Gr 8)	93% (Gr 10)
New York	PEP Test – Reading	85% (Gr 3)	90% (Gr 6)	
	Math	88% (Gr 3)	90% (Gr 6)	
	Writing	90% (Gr 5)		

Table 6. Percent of Students Receiving Special Education Services Who Participated in State Assessments (continued)

State	Assessment/ Subject Area	Elementary Grades (K-5)	Middle School Grades (6-8)	High School Grades (9-12)
Ohio	Proficiency Test (Citizenship, Math, Reading, Science, Writing)	62% (Gr 4)	59% (Gr 6)	57% (Gr 9) 34% (Gr 12)
Oklahoma	Iowa Test of Basic Skills (Reading, Math, Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, other)	80% (Gr 3)	84% (Gr 7)	
	OK Core Curriculum Tests (Math, Science, Reading, Constitution and Government, Geography, Visual Arts and Music)	80% (Gr 5)	75% (Gr 8)	58% (Gr 11)
	OK Core Curriculum - Writing	78% (Gr 5)	75% (Gr 8)	63% (Gr 11)
Pennsylvania	Reading and Math Assessment	48% (Gr 5)	56% (Gr 8)	32% (Gr 11)
Rhode Island	Writing Performance Assessment	95% (Gr 3)	92% (Gr 7)	91% (Gr 10)
	Health Performance Assessment	92% (Gr 5)	89% (Gr 9)	
South Dakota	Stanford Achievement Test (Language, Math, Reading, Science, Social Science)	53% (Gr 2) 63% (Gr 4)	74% (Gr 8)	67% (Gr 11)
Tennessee	TCAP Writing Assessment	65% (Gr 4)	66% (Gr 7)	39% (Gr 11)
	TCAP Achievement	79% (Gr 3) 77% (Gr 4) 73% (Gr 5)	76% (Gr 6) 71% (Gr 7) 76% (Gr 8)	
	TCAP Competency			76% (Gr 9) 73% (Gr 10) 74% (Gr 11) 64% (Gr 12)
Texas	TAAS – Reading	38% (Gr 3) 34% (Gr 4) 36% (Gr 5)	39% (Gr 6) 42% (Gr 7) 42% (Gr 8)	42% (Gr 10)
	Mathematics	48% (Gr 3) 42% (Gr 4) 41% (Gr 5)	44% (Gr 6) 44% (Gr 7) 41% (Gr 8)	41% (Gr 10)
	Writing	31% (Gr 4)	39% (Gr 8)	41% (Gr 10)
	Social Studies		45% (Gr 8)	
	Science		45% (Gr 8)	
Vermont	Developmental Reading	92% (Gr 2)		
	Math	90% (Gr 4)	87% (Gr 8)	50% (Gr 10)
	English Language Arts	88% (Gr 4)	77% (Gr 9)	50% (Gr 10)
	Science		91% (Gr 6)	
Washington	Washington Assessment of Student Learning	92% (Gr 4)	94% (Gr 7)	
West Virginia	SAT 9 – Language, Math, Reading, Science, Social Studies	89% (Gr 3-11)		
Wisconsin	Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam (Math, Reading, Science, Social Studies, Writing, Language Arts)	23% (Gr 4)	15% (Gr 8)	26% (Gr 10)

*Repeat years of exit tests are not included in this table.

Twelve states were able to report data on the number of students who used accommodations. These data, also calculated as percentages by NCEO, are provided in Table 7. Rates of use vary from less than one-fourth of students with disabilities to more than three-quarters. The variability in rates may be due, in part, to differences in definition and what kinds of accommodations are counted (e.g., some states count only modifications).

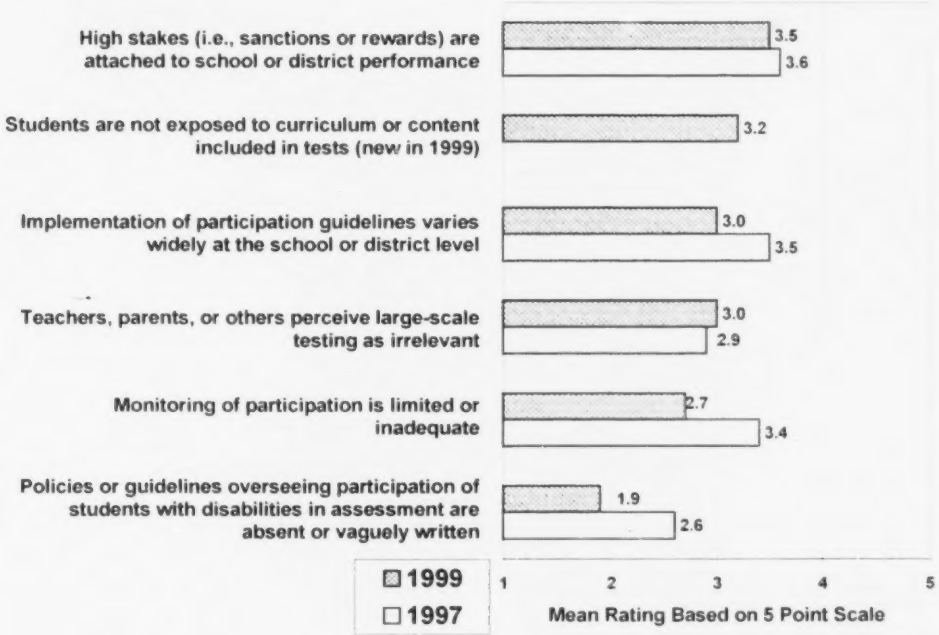
Table 7. Percent of Students Receiving Special Education Services Who Used Testing Accommodations

State	Assessment/ Subject Area	Elementary Grades (K-5)	Middle School Grades (6-8)	High School Grades (9-12)
Florida	FL Writing Assessment	51%(Gr 4)	39% (Gr 8)	34% (Gr 10)
	FCAT (Reading)	47% (Gr 4)	38% (Gr 8)	40% (Gr 10)
	FCAT (Math)	50% (Gr 5)	38% (Gr 8)	39% (Gr 10)
Indiana	Statewide Assessment - Math	28% (Gr 3)	34% (Gr 6) 38% (Gr 8)	80% (Gr10)
	English/Language Arts	29% (Gr 3)	34% (Gr 6) 38% (Gr 8)	82% (Gr 10)
Kansas	KS Assessment Program – Math	21% (Gr 4)	14% (Gr 7)	08% (Gr 10)
	Reading	19% (Gr 3)	13% (Gr 7)	08% (Gr 10)
	Writing	23% (Gr 5)	17% (Gr 7)	09% (Gr 10)
Kentucky	Kentucky Core Content Test	82% (Gr 4) 82% (Gr 5)	72% (Gr 7) 70% (Gr 8)	50% (Gr 10) 57% (Gr 11) 55% (Gr 12)
Massachusetts	Comprehensive Assessment System	61% (Gr 4)	38% (Gr 8)	25% (Gr 10)
Maryland	MSPAP - Reading	53% (Gr 3) 51% (Gr 5)	25% (Gr 8)	
	Language Usage	44% (Gr 3) 41% (Gr 5)	16% (Gr 8)	
	Math	20% (Gr 3)		
Nevada	Terra Nova Complete Battery	51% (Gr 4)	42% (Gr 8)	44% (Gr 10)
New York	PEP Test – Reading	50% (Gr 3)	50% (Gr 6)	
	Math	31% (Gr 3)	32% (Gr 6)	
	Writing	33% (Gr 5)		
Pennsylvania	Reading and Math Assessment	67% (Gr 5)	52% (Gr 8)	45% (Gr 11)
Rhode Island	Writing Performance Assessment	49% (Gr 3)	55% (Gr 7)	60% (Gr 10)
	Health Performance Assessment	39% (Gr 5)	61% (Gr 9)	
South Dakota	Stanford Achievement Test (Language, Math, Reading, Science, Social Science)	63% (Gr2) 67% (Gr 4)	59% (Gr 8)	46% (Gr 11)
West Virginia	SAT 9 – Language, Math, Reading, Science, Social Studies	64% (Gr 3-11)		

There are several factors that state directors of special education believe may work against the full participation of students with disabilities in large-scale assessment programs, especially in states where accountability systems have significant consequences for students or schools (see Figure 2). Most of the factors reported in 1999 inhibit participation to a somewhat lesser degree than they did in 1997. High stakes (i.e., sanctions or rewards) attached to school or district performance remains the greatest source of discouragement. A new item in 1999, focusing on exposure to the curriculum or content included in tests, is perceived to inhibit participation to a high degree and will be important to continue to track in future years. The perception of teachers, parents, and others that large-scale testing is irrelevant to the educational success of students with disabilities also remains a significant barrier. Implementation of participation guidelines varies widely at the school or district level, but less than in 1997. The least inhibiting factor this year is "policies or guidelines overseeing participation of students with disabilities in assessment are absent or vaguely written." The decreases in ratings for both the monitoring and policies/guidelines items reflect substantial changes from 1997.

High stakes attached to school or district performance and lack of exposure of students with disabilities to test content are factors that inhibit greater participation of students with disabilities in assessment systems.

Figure 2. Factors Discouraging Participation of Students with Disabilities in State Assessment Programs



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State Activities in Developing Alternate Assessments

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS PROVIDE A MECHANISM FOR STUDENTS WHO CANNOT PARTICIpate in state and district-wide assessments, even with accommodations, to be included in state and district accountability systems. In 1997, NCEO began to assess the status of states in the development of alternate assessments using an on-line survey. This provided all states with continuous, up-to-date information on what other states are doing in the development of their alternate assessments. The data reported in Tables 8-10 were compiled from state responses to the Alternate Assessment On-line Survey in October, 1999. At this time, 43 regular states and three unique states had completed the survey. The date is important to note, since states are continually working on their alternate assessments and updating the information in the survey (see http://www.coled.umn.edu/nceo/survey.htm).

Nearly half of the states report using the same standards for alternate assessments as they use in general education assessments, or some variation of them, such as expanded standards (see Table 8). Other states are developing different standards for students participating in alternate assessments, or are still uncertain about what standards they will use.

Table 8. Alternate Assessment Standards*

Alternate Assessment Standards	Regular States	Unique States
Identical to those applied to general education	6	0
General education standards with some additions	1	0
Subset of those applied to general education	14	2
Independently developed for students needing alternate assessments	8	0
Uncertain at this time	14	1

*Includes the responses of 43 regular states and 3 unique states to the Alternate Assessment Survey, as of October, 1999.

Table 9 shows the status of states in various aspects of the development of their alternate assessments. Most states are continuing to work on identifying standards, establishing eligibility guidelines, and creating assessment tools or systems.

Table 9. States Engaged in Various Alternate Assessment Activities*

State Activity	Regular States	Unique States
Identifying standards	34	0
Establishing eligibility guidelines	36	1
Identifying/creating instrument	32	1
Training on alternate assessment	12	0
Establishing proficiency levels	22	0
Determining reporting procedures	23	0
Determining inclusion in high stakes	18	0

*Includes the responses of 43 regular states and 3 unique states to the Alternate Assessment Survey, as of October, 1999.

Several states now have selected the data collection methods that they are using for their alternate assessments (see Table 10). Most states have decided to use observations, portfolios, or performance assessments. However, many states have not yet selected their alternate assessment approach.

Table 10. Alternate Assessment Approaches Selected by States*

State Activity	Regular States	Unique States
Observation (direct, video, or other)	8	0
Student portfolio	4	0
Performance assessment	4	0
Survey (mail or other) or Interview	3	0
Review of progress	3	0
Adapted regular state assessment	3	0
Adaptive behavior scale	2	0

*Includes the responses of 43 regular states and 3 unique states to the Alternate Assessment Survey, as of October, 1999.

Only 29 state directors were able to give a number when asked to estimate the percent of students in their states whose exposure to the content covered on statewide assessments was so limited that it made little sense to give them the regular assessment for their age or grade level (see Table 11). Some estimated the percentage of students with disabilities while others estimated the percentage of all students. The distinction between the two percentages still seems to be confusing to states. Some states were able to base their estimation on actual participation data, while others were making educated guesses. Eight states reported that they are not able to estimate this percentage yet, but will have better information once their alternate assessments are in place. State provided estimates varied considerably, with as many states estimating more than 4% (and some of these as high as 9%) as estimated one percent or less.

Table 11. Estimated Percentages of All Students Whose Exposure to Content is Too Limited for Them to Participate in Regular Assessment

< 1 – 1%	> 1 – 2%	> 2 – 4%	> 4%
Delaware*	California	Arkansas*	Mississippi
Kansas	Colorado	Connecticut	Ohio
Kentucky	Hawaii	Massachusetts	South Dakota
Maryland	Idaho	Missouri	Tennessee
Minnesota	Indiana	New Hampshire	Texas*
Nebraska	Florida*	New Mexico	West Virginia
Vermont	Louisiana	Utah	
	Nevada	Washington	
	Oregon	Wisconsin	
	Rhode Island		
	Virginia		

*State provided percentage of students with disabilities was transformed to a percentage of all students using the special education rate.

Most states are in the process of developing their alternate assessments. Expected participation rates of all students unable to participate in regular assessments varies considerably in the 29 states ready to make predictions, implying that there will also be large variations in alternate assessment participation rates.

When asked to estimate how many students per grade level are expected to participate in alternate assessments, for both the current school year (1999-2000) during which alternate assessments are not required by law, and the upcoming school year (2000-01), when alternate assessments are required, state directors sometimes responded with percentages of all students rather than just students with disabilities. Most states estimated that percentages would stay the same, but some foresaw decreases and others increases (see Table 12).

Table 12. Estimated Changes in Alternate Assessment Participation from 1999-2000 to 2000-01*

Decrease	Same	Increase
Florida	California	Colorado
Idaho	Delaware	Massachusetts
West Virginia	Hawaii	Tennessee
Wyoming	Kansas	
	Kentucky	
	New Mexico	
	Texas	
	Washington	

*Only 15 states were able to make projections for both years.

Reporting and Using Assessment Results

PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON REGULAR ASSESSMENTS NOW MUST BE disaggregated from the scores of other students and reported in the same way as the performance of other students is reported. In 1999, all directors with statewide assessments indicated that scores of test-takers receiving special education services were disaggregated. In 1997, 22 states did *not* disaggregate scores. Reasons for disaggregating data are primarily to conduct separate analyses or report the results. Still, 11 states indicated they are removing the scores of students with disabilities from further analyses (see Figure 3). Removing scores was the *only* reason cited by four states (Connecticut, Hawaii, Iowa, and Nebraska).

All directors with statewide assessments indicated that scores of test-takers receiving special education services were disaggregated from the scores of other students, mostly to conduct separate analyses on the performance of students with disabilities.

Figure 3. Reasons for Disaggregating Performance Data

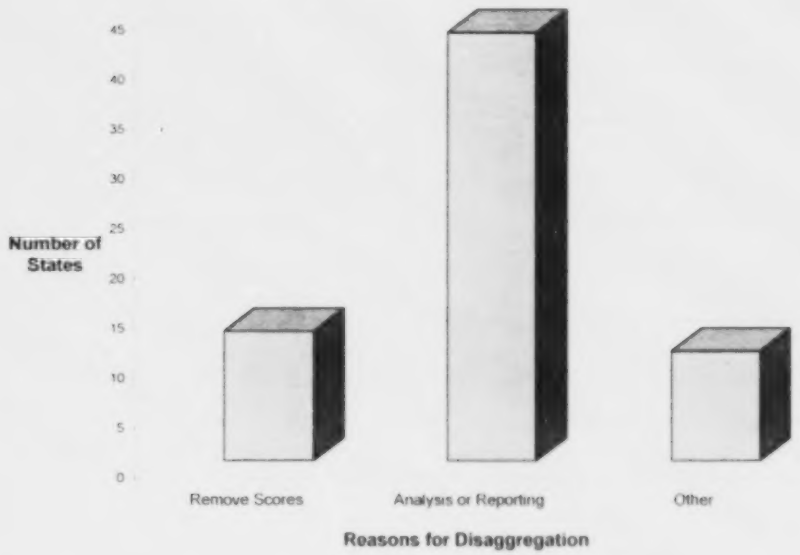

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Table 13 shows the ways in which results are reported in the 41 states that separate scores for analysis or reporting. Most states are publicly reporting on the performance of students with disabilities.

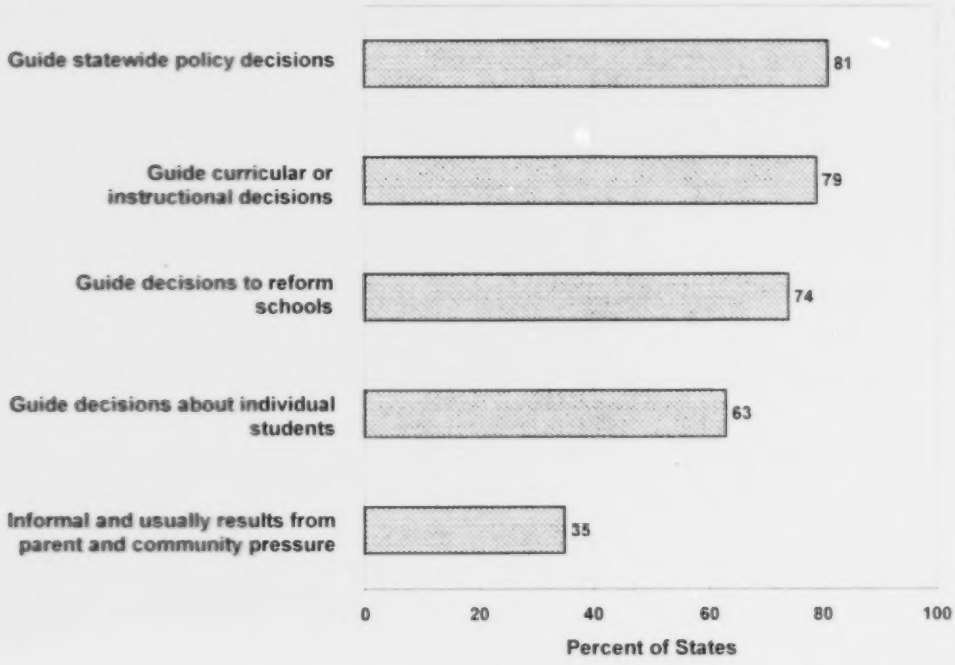
Table 13. Ways in which Results of Separate Analyses of Students with Disabilities are Reported

State	Internal report for review by SEA personnel	Internal report to local district or school officials	Publicly released report that includes all test takers	Publicly released report that includes only students with disabilities
Alabama			■	
Arkansas		■		■
Arizona	■	■		
California	■			
Colorado		■	■	
Delaware	■	■	■	
Florida	■	■		
Georgia	■	■	■	
Idaho	■	■		
Indiana			■	
Kansas	■	■		
Kentucky	■	■	■	
Louisiana	■	■	■	
Maryland	■	■	■	
Massachusetts	■	■	■	
Michigan	■		■	■
Minnesota			■	■
Mississippi	■	■	■	■
Missouri	■	■	■	
Montana	■		■	
North Carolina	■	■	■	
Nevada	■	■		
New Hampshire	■	■	■	
New Mexico	■			
New York	■	■	■	
North Dakota		■	■	
Ohio	■	■	■	
Oregon	■	■	■	
Pennsylvania	■	■	■	
Rhode Island			■	
South Carolina	■	■	■	
South Dakota	■	■		
Tennessee			■	
Texas	■	■	■	■
Utah	■	■		
Vermont				■
Virginia	■	■	■	■
Washington	■			
Wisconsin			■	
West Virginia	■	■	■	
Wyoming	■		■	

About three fourths of the state directors use test results for at least three distinct purposes, including guiding statewide policy decisions, curricular or instructional decisions, and decisions to reform schools (see Figure 4). Over half use them to guide decisions about individual students. About one-third of the directors indicated that the use of test results is informal and usually results from parent and community pressure.

Test results are primarily used for guiding statewide policy decisions, decisions to reform schools, and decisions about individual students. Yet, about one-third of states use the results in informal ways, often as a result of parent and community pressure.

Figure 4. Uses of Test Results Across States



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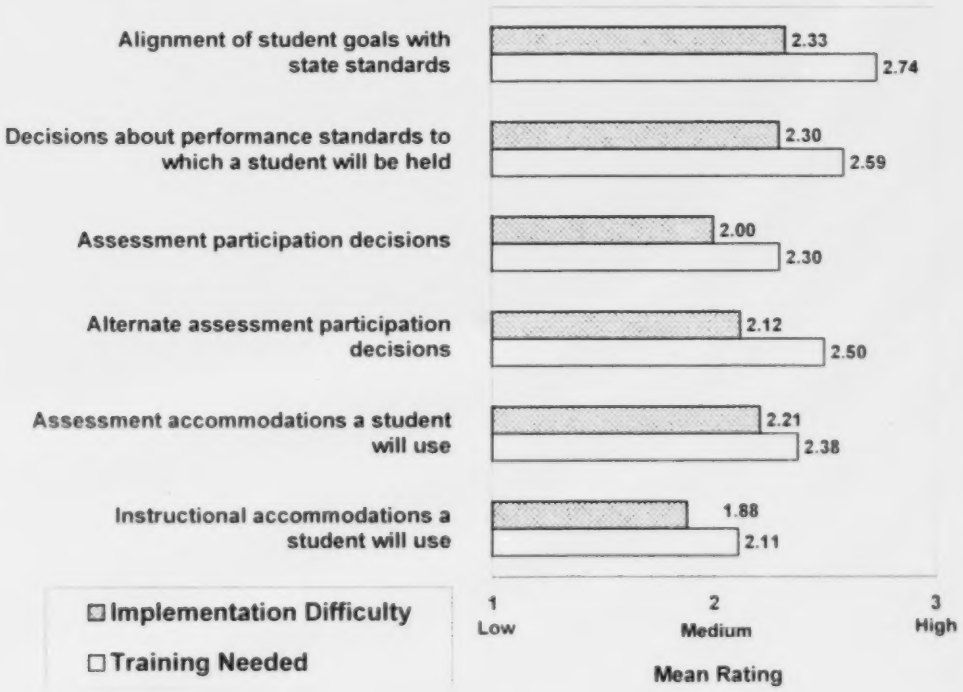
Individualized Education Programs and Assessments

Greatest needs for training involve clarifying how student goals are aligned with state standards and defining performance standards for students with disabilities.

The 1997 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act will likely lead to fundamental changes in how Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are written, implemented, and evaluated. Two areas of greatest difficulty and need for training are alignment of student goals with state standards, and decisions about the performance standards to which students with disabilities will be held (see Figure 5). State directors reported having the least difficulty and lowest training needs in determining the instructional accommodations students will use.

States have used several strategies to meet the assessment provisions of IDEA. The approach used by the greatest number of states is training (70% of states), followed by the development and dissemination of written policies (44% of states). These approaches and others identified by states are summarized in Appendix A for those states that responded.

Figure 5. IEPs and Assessment—Areas of Difficulty and Need for Training



Standards-based Reform

THE CHARTS IN FIGURE 6 SUMMARIZE THE CURRENT STATUS OF STATES WITH RESPECT TO several standards-based reform practices. For those states with some activity underway, the figure also shows the involvement of state special education personnel.

State special education involvement in standards-based reform is highest for practices directly related to students with disabilities.

Passing an exit exam for graduation from high school is required by 19 states, with another 9 states either developing or planning an exit exam. In nearly half of the 35 states with some activity, special educators have high to very high involvement.

Eighteen states allow IEP teams to change graduation requirements for individual students. Another four are planning to do so. Three-quarters of the 30 states with some activity have high to very high involvement of special educators.

Rewards or sanctions for schools or districts based on accountability results is a practice currently being implemented by 16 states; 12 additional states are developing rewards and sanctions practices, and 4 are planning. Most state special education personnel have some or high involvement.

Out-of-level testing is implemented by 10 states, with development or planning taking place in 10 states. High involvement with this issue was the most frequent response of special educators.

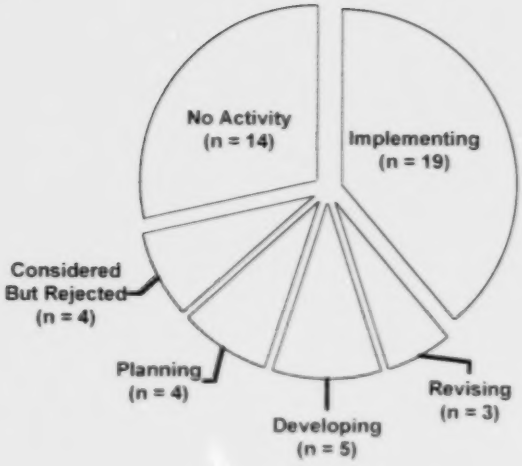
Only 7 states are implementing end-of-course testing, but another 7 are either in development or planning stages. Involvement of special education personnel is varied, yet almost half of the states with some activity indicate high involvement.

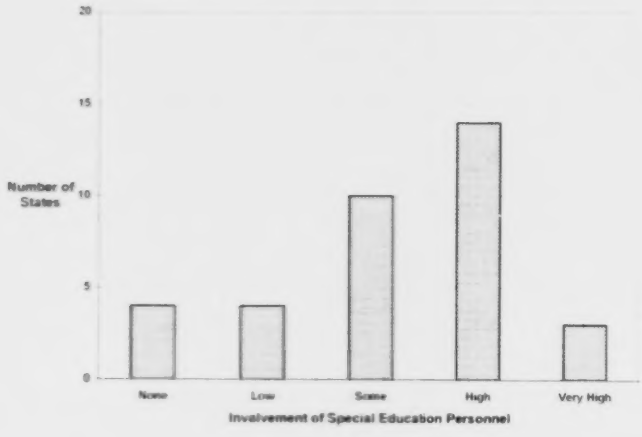
Only 4 states are aggregating results of their alternate assessment with the results of the general assessment. Most states are in the planning stage. Involvement of special education personnel in states with some activity in this area is primarily high to very high.

Clearly, special education personnel are most highly involved in practices that are most directly related to students with disabilities, especially aggregating results of alternate assessments with general assessment results and allowing IEP teams to change graduation requirements for individual students. Practices relating to all students, or those where the inclusion of students with disabilities might be seen as detrimental, such as determining rewards or sanctions for schools based on accountability results, have the least involvement of special education personnel. Comments by individual states about their activities across each of these practices can be found in Appendix B.

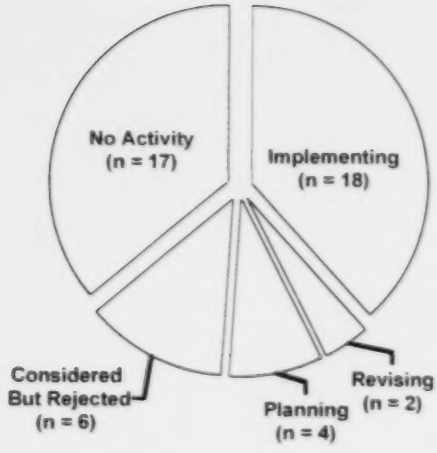
Figure 6. Level of State Activity and Involvement of State Special Education Personnel in Standards-based Reform

Exit exams required for graduation





Allowing IEP teams to change graduation requirements for individual students



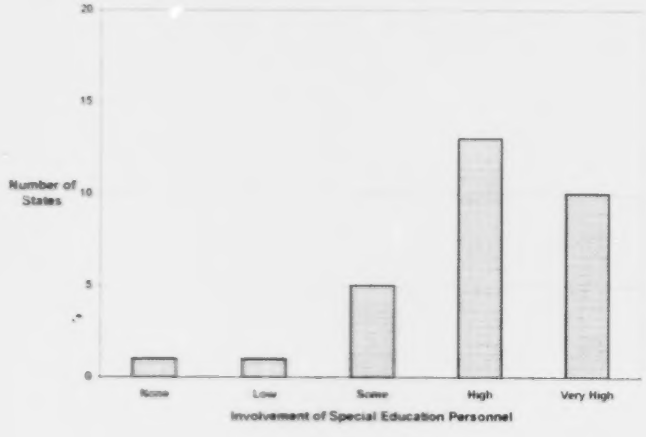
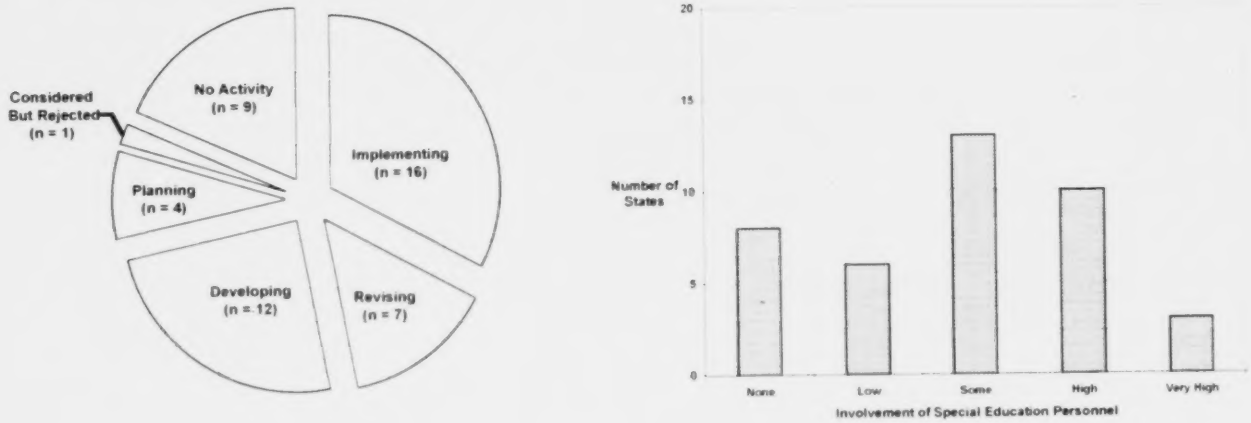


Figure 6. Level of State Activity and Involvement of State Special Education Personnel in Standards-based Reform (continued)

Rewards or sanctions for schools or districts based on accountability results



Out-of-level testing for large-scale accountability systems

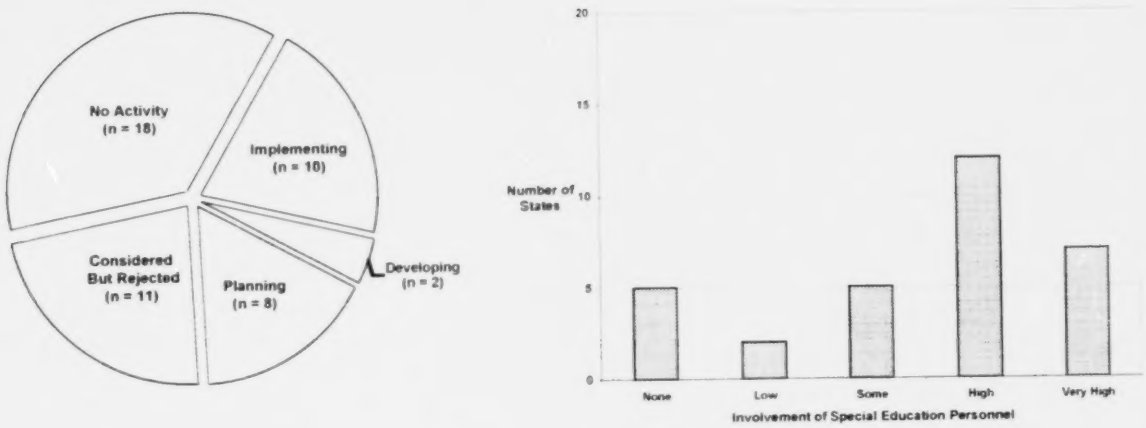


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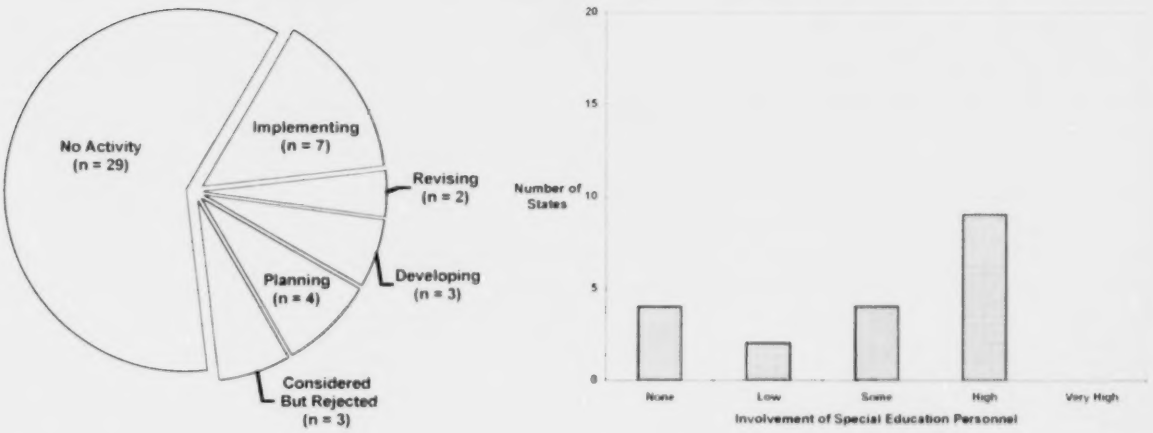
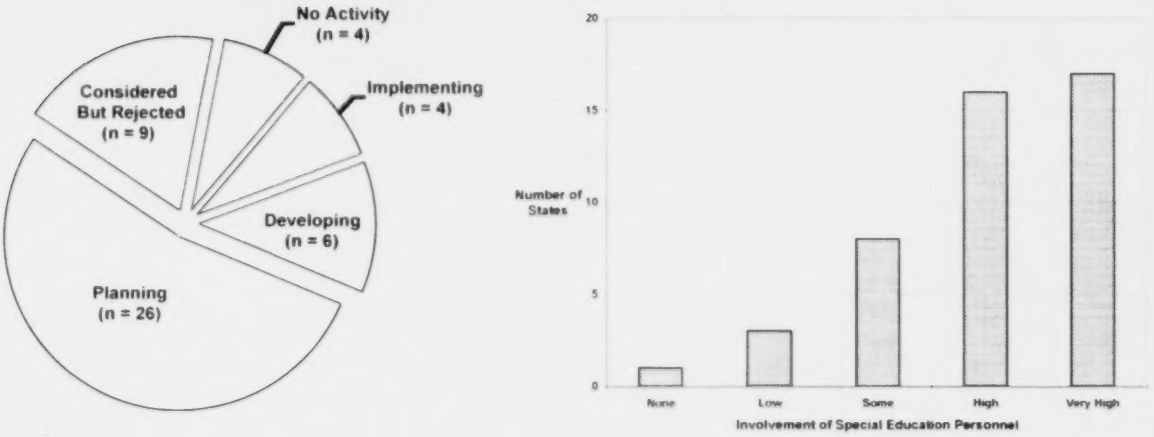
Figure 6. Level of State Activity and Involvement of State Special Education Personnel in Standards-based Reform (continued)

End-of-course testing as a measure of accountability



Aggregating results of alternate assessment with general assessment results



Current Issues and Technical Assistance Needs

ACCORDING TO STATE DIRECTORS, THE FACTOR PRESENTING THE GREATEST BARRIER TO obtaining educational accountability information on students with disabilities is lack of resources (see Table 14). The adequacy of assessments for use with all students is also seen as a significant barrier. The fewest barriers are attributed to cooperation between general and special education and concerns or resistance by state agency personnel.

Lack of resources and inadequate assessments are seen as the greatest barriers to obtaining educational accountability information on students with disabilities.

Table 14. Factors Presenting Barriers to the Development, Implementation, and Reporting of Educational Accountability Information on Students Receiving Special Education Services

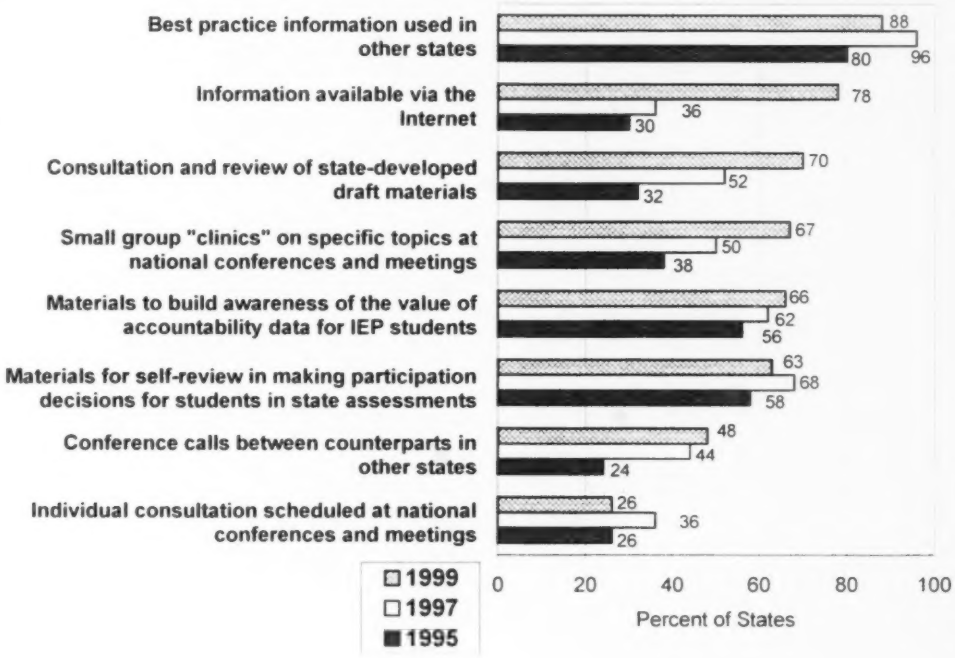
	Ratings of Barriers (Number of States)				
Factors	**None**	**Minimum**	**Moderate**	**Major**	**Mean Rating***
Lack of resources	0	16	18	14	1.96
Adequacy of assessments for all students	0	16	20	11	1.89
Concerns or resistance by local school personnel	0	13	29	5	1.83
Policies or practices regarding test accommodations	2	21	18	7	1.63
Policies or practices regarding participation	5	19	14	7	1.51
Appropriateness of standards for all students	5	20	14	8	1.50
Availability of data on who is excluded from assessment	8	20	10	9	1.43
Lack of technical expertise	7	20	17	3	1.34
Concerns or resistance by parents and community members	4	28	9	5	1.33
Availability of data on who receives accommodations	10	17	11	6	1.30
Lack of cooperation between general and special education	8	22	15	1	1.20
Concerns or resistance by state agency personnel	13	26	7	1	.91

*For the mean rating, none = 0, minimum = 1, moderate = 2, major = 3.

Technical assistance needs reflect the issues states are facing. Figure 7 illustrates the change in preferred forms of technical assistance since 1995. While access to best practice information continues to be rated high, information available via the Internet has soared in 1999 to a level nearly as high as best practice information.

Best practice information continues to lead the list of preferred technical assistance, but the desire for obtaining information from the Internet has soared since 1997.

Figure 7. Technical Assistance Needs of State Directors



Appendix A: Approaches States Have Found Most Helpful in Meeting the Assessment Provisions of IDEA

Approaches States Have Found Most Helpful in Meeting the Assessment Provisions of IDEA

State	Response
Alabama	Training
Arkansas	Written policies; linking IEP goals/objectives to curriculum frameworks of state; refining data collection and reporting procedures with test producers; training; monitoring practices.
California	Development of new monitoring procedures and presentations at regional meetings and conferences.
Colorado	Training materials; trainer of trainers; conferences; parent center involvement; listserv, teleTA, & Web site.
Connecticut	Since implementation is not required until July 2000 no training, monitoring have been conducted. Policies in development.
Delaware	Stakeholder groups, informing all parties regularly (SBE, parents, teachers, administrators), providing written guidelines and training.
Florida	Training at local levels, written policies from state level; monitoring practices (just beginning); providing inclusion rate reports to districts (has heightened awareness and made folks pay attention to what's reported!).
Hawaii	Working with NCEO personnel, SCASS group, training and working with parents.
Iowa	Ongoing professional development.
Idaho	Written policies, large group training, small workshops, 1:1 TA, monitoring, district accountability.
Indiana	Training and written policies.
Kansas	Since everything is so new, the development of training packages is delayed because the development of written policies takes place. Staff development, that results in an understanding of the requirements, and what is right for students, teachers, and parents.
Kentucky	Written policies, training, professional development, technical assistance, and monitoring.
Louisiana	Training & task force discussions.
Massachusetts	Regional training - Addendum to the IEP, direct mailing of guidelines. Contractor forcing us to stay focused to get our $ worth.
Maryland	Continuous training of LEA's, teachers, and parents. Intense training of IHEs.
Minnesota	Written accommodations guidelines; training for special education and general education together; participation decision-making tool available on the Internet.
Missouri	Training, monitoring practices, written policies.
Mississippi	Written policies and guidelines, Intense training, Follow up.
Montana	Alternate assessments based on rating the students' performance directly with the state's standards.
North Carolina	Training.
North Dakota	Training and written policies.
Nebraska	Written policies, training, technical assistance documents.
New Hampshire	Written policies, training, monitoring practices.
New Jersey	1. Joint training activities by our Office of Special Education Programs and Office of Assessment accompanied by written guidelines. 2. Presentations for various constituencies with opportunities to solicit their input. 3. Participation of special educators.
New Mexico	Working closely with our Assessment and Evaluation Unit staff. Providing written guidance to the field from the Superintendent.
Nevada	We have issued policy guidelines and provided some training. More training is needed, and more user-friendly guidelines for making participation and accommodations decisions are needed. We're working on these this year.
New York	Public reporting of results, monitoring and training based on data, and written policies.
Ohio	Training.
Oklahoma	Written policies, training, monitoring practices.
Oregon	Training, monitoring practices, written policies.
South Carolina	Training, monitoring practices, written policies.
South Dakota	In-service training and technical assistance guides.
Tennessee	Training, written policies.

Approaches States Have Found Most Helpful in Meeting the Assessment Provisions of IDEA (continued)

State	Response
Texas	Written policies; coordination between the various state and regional divisions of the Texas Education Agency; training; monitoring practices; website; statewide steering committee with parents, professional educators, advocates, and state student accountability division.
Utah	Training of special education, general education, and testing staff in local districts has been very helpful. Written guidelines with decision-making strategies for IEP teams and feedback to district regarding their performance have also been helpful.
Wisconsin	Training and consulting with experts in the field.
West Virginia	Collaboration with the Office of Assessment within the WVDE for policy development, training, monitoring. Also, participation in conferences and Spec Ed SCASS, especially helpful with alternate assessment, and assistance from Mid-South RRC.
Wyoming	Access to information on our web page www.k12.wy.us.
Virgin Islands	Professional development, guided dialogue, and written procedures.

Appendix B: Comments about Standards-based Reform Activities

Exit exams required for graduation

State	State's Level of Activity	Special Education's Involvement	Description of Activity
Alabama	Implementation	High	Implementation of current exam and in revision for new exam. Giving EE and developing a new exam on new content. Note: Special Educators (SDE & LEA) used on all committees.
Arkansas	Considered but Rejected	High	Arkansas had this required but has since eliminated it.
Arizona	Implementation	High	Our graduation test will be implemented next year (2000).
California		Low	High school exit exams were mandated early in 1999.
Delaware	Implementation	Some	Administration of 10th grade DSTP in Spring of 2000 will count for High School Diploma.
Florida	Implementation	Very High	Currently have a minimum skills test for graduation and are transitioning to an on level graduation test (FCAT) in 2003.
Idaho	Planning	Some	Expected to be implemented in 2005.
Kansas	No Activity	----	Local decision.
Louisiana	In Revision	Some	For the past ten years Louisiana has provided students with graduate exit exams; currently test exams are under revision.
Massachusetts	Planning	High	Under Education Reform requirement for graduation is passing MCAS tests.
Minnesota	Implementation	High	Students with IEPs can pass the exit exam at an "individual" level (lower score or modified test) and still receive a regular high school diploma.
Missouri	Planning	Some	This is being discussed in our state.
New Jersey	Implementation	High	All students must pass our High School Proficiency Assessment to receive a diploma except those who are exempt on their IEPs. Students may also pass an alternative test, the Special Review Assessment, which measures the same proficiencies as the HSPA.
New Mexico	Implementation	Low	High School Competency Exam in grade 10, passing rates of 90% or higher are typical.
New York	Implementation	High	Regents' exams are exit exams and are requirements for graduation. Students with disabilities may meet lower standards during the period the State is phasing in new higher standards for all students.
Ohio	Implementation	High	Students must pass high school proficiency test in order to receive a diploma.
Oklahamo	Considered but Rejected	None	Legislation does not require exit exams, but requires passing end of course tests before graduation.
Oregon	Implementation		Our school reform system is in place at this time.
Tennessee	In Revision	High	In transition from competency tests to high stakes EOC tests.
Texas	Implementation	Very High	Students with disabilities must take the Exit Exam for graduation when the IEP Committee has determined it is an appropriate test, considering the effects of the student's disability, the instructional content required in the IEP for FAPE, and the student's requirements for accommodations in test administration.
Utah	Development	High	To be implemented in 2003. Testing will begin in 10th grade. Students who pass receive regular diploma. Students can retake test until it is passed. Test has yet to be developed.

IEP teams allowed to change graduation requirements for individual students

State	State's Level of Activity	Special Education's Involvement	Description of Activity
Arizona	Implementation	High	IEP teams may determine the level at which the graduation test will be given to students with IEP.
California	Planning	High	Policies are under development for use with new promotion standards and the high school exit exam.
Colorado	No Activity	Some	The decision is made by the district only; the state only guides.
Connecticut	Implementation	Very High	Has been in place for years. IEP team may determine that a requirement is not appropriate for a student or determine what coursework will satisfy the requirement.
Delaware	Planning	High	Very preliminary discussions.
Florida	No Activity	Very High	We have a special diploma option that is determined by the IEP but it is not Considered but Rejected a diploma (standard) Students with disabilities always have the right and opportunity to pursue a standard diploma by meeting the same requirements as other students.
Massachusetts	No Activity	Very High	We will need to consider this when the state sets graduation requirements.
Minnesota	Implementation	Very High	Students with IEPs can have individualized graduation requirements and still get a regular diploma.
Missouri	Implementation	Very High	High school diplomas can be issued based upon completion of IEP goals and objectives.
Mississippi	No Activity	Low	IEP teams determine exiting goals and objectives, requirements for a standard diploma are established by the State Board of Education.
Montana	Implementation		Schools across the state have been practicing this for years.
New Jersey	Implementation		IEP teams must include graduation requirements in the IEP. Students who meet modified graduation requirements as stated in the IEP receive the same state endorsed diploma as those nondisabled students who meet all mandated graduation requirements.
New Mexico	Implementation	High	Recent revision of state regulations specifies how the team should operate.
Nevada	Implementation	Very High	In Nevada, a student who has a disability can earn an "adjusted" diploma based upon completion of program outlined in IEP. IEP teams cannot change regular diploma graduation requirements for individual students.
New York	Implementation	High	All students must meet same standards, however there is a safety net that applies to students with disabilities and Section 504 students, allowing such students to meet lower graduation requirements. This is work in progress.
Oklahoma	In Revision	Some	Current legislation does not mention students on IEPs and has no provision for changing course requirements for graduation.
Tennessee	Considered but Rejected	High	State law does not allow.
Texas	Implementation	Very High	IEP teams may not change graduation requirements set in state law and policy. However, there are various plans for achieving graduation for students in the general curriculum, and three additional options for SWD. The IEP team is required to identify, plan, and provide the student the appropriate rout to graduation.
Utah	Implementation	Very High	IEP teams determine graduation requirements including participation in test required for graduation.
Vermont	Implementation	Very High	Allow IEP teams to develop multi-year plans. Plans must be endorsed by the school superintendent or designee.
Wisconsin	----	----	Unsure at this time.
West Virginia	Implementation	Very High	IEP teams can determine if student is working toward a regular or modified diploma. These criteria are defined in state board policy.
Wyoming	In Revision		State has developed a task force to study this issue.

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Rewards or sanctions for schools or districts based on accountability results

State	State's Level of Activity	Special Education's Involvement	Description of Activity
Alabama	Implementation	Some	At-risk funding for low achievers. Schools/LEAs placed on Alert, Caution, clear lists with consequences.
Arizona	Planning	Low	There was legislation proposed to require the State Board to do this.
California	Development	Some	An Academic Performance Index is under development.
Colorado	Development	None	Awaiting board decision on accreditation rules.
Connecticut	Implementation	None	Funding formula provides additional dollars to low performing schools in an effort to bring them up.
Delaware	Development	Some	Accountability Task Force is making those decisions currently.
Florida	Implementation	High	Two years of test results are used to define all schools on achievement levels 1 through 5. Vouchers are allowed for schools at level 1. Currently only students with speech and language impairments are included in this calculation.
Georgia	Planning	Low	State is just beginning to consider.
Kansas	Considered but Rejected	Low	The results of students on the Kansas State Assessments, is a part of the accreditation process for schools.
Kentucky	In Revision	High	State accountability regulations have been revised to determine a new method for determining school accountability rewards and sanctions.
Louisiana	Implementation	High	This is the first year for school accountability.
Massachusetts	Development	Some	Plan to identify under performing schools.
Maryland	Implementation	Very High	Both rewards and sanctions are applied for MSPAP. Student Diploma or non-diploma for Functional Test.
Missouri	Implementation	High	Requirement is in state law. Rules are being developed.
New Jersey	In Revision	High	Current proposal: districts must have an 85% passing rate on statewide assessments or show year to year improvement to pass state monitoring. For special education students, we are planning to look at participation rates and performance.
New Mexico	In Revision	Low	Not ranking but rating schools on five factors: achievement; attendance; dropouts; parent/community involvement; and safety.
Nevada	Implementation	Some	Since 1997, the Nevada Education Reform Act has used results from Terra Nova Testing to evaluate school-level accountability, with various consequences being attached to the results.
New York	Implementation	High	Local Assistance Plans must be prepare by school districts for low performing schools. Lowest performing schools are subject to registration review and eventual closure or re-design if they do not improve. Our accountability system is currently under revision.
Ohio	Implementation	Some	State intervention will be required for some district performing poorly.
Oregon	Development	Low	State legislation regarding district effectiveness.
Tennessee	Development	Some	Value added rewards and sanctions being developed.
Texas	Implementation	Some	TX does include consideration of student performance, including SWD, on the state accountability test in the rating system for rewarding or sanctioning districts.
Utah	Development	Some	New state legislation passed in 1999 session is requiring state office to further develop accountability system for implementation in 2003.
Vermont	Development	Very High	AYP system based on growth factors under development.
Virginia	Development	Some	The Board has held public hearings on what policy should be.
Wisconsin	Implementation	High	Wisconsin's criteria for identifying schools "in need of improvement" have been in place for several years. Until recently, this criteria was based on the percentage of students achieving in the top two of the state's four proficiency levels.
West Virginia	Implementation	Some	Current rewards or sanctions do not specifically address students with disabilities - their results are aggregated into school totals if they took the assessment under standard conditions.

Out-of-level testing for large-scale accountability systems

State	State's Level of Activity	Special Education's Involvement	Description of Activity
Arizona	Implementation	High	For both our NRT and standards-based assessment systems, as per State Board decision.
California	Implementation	Low	There is discussion on resolving inequitable reporting practices for out-of-level testing.
Connecticut	Implementation	Very High	CT has allowed out-of-level testing for about 10 years.
Idaho	----	High	Data to support or refute the need is currently being collected.
Massachusetts	Planning	None	Planning is too strong, we are considering and have not rejected the idea.
North Dakota	Implementation	Some	Out-of-level Testing guidelines for CTBS followed.
New York	Considered but Rejected	High	We allow school districts to define "age appropriate" when making decisions regarding when students are to be tested.
Oklahoma	Considered but Rejected	Some	State will revisit this issue for possible consideration in the next few months.
Oregon	Development	High	1999-2000 is to be the first year of implementation.
Tennessee	Considered by Rejected	Very High	Accommodations committee rejected due to validity issues.
Texas	Development	Very High	The current accountability assessment, TAAS, does not permit out-of-level testing. This is the major reason students with disabilities are exempt. Texas is developing an alternate test of students' progress in the state's general curriculum for students with disabilities who are taught in the curriculum but for whom the TAAS is not an appropriate test.
Utah	Implementation	Very High	Out-of-level testing is an option on the end-of-course, end-of-level tests only.
Vermont	Implementation	Very High	Out-of-level tests may be requested. Use must be approved by Dept. of Ed. on a case-by-case basis.
West Virginia	Implementation	Very High	Currently, students cannot only be tested one grade level below placement; this is a modification and nonstandard administration.

End-of-course testing as a measure of accountability

State	State's Level of Activity	Special Education's Involvement	Description of Activity
Arizona	In Revision	High	All grades except 11th which is in "Development."
California	Considered but Rejected	None	California's Golden State Exam program is not used for accountability purposes.
Idaho	Planning	Some	Assessment for State standards is in the planning phase.
Maryland	Development	High	Developing for High school. Field-testing in 1999-2000 school year.
New York	Implementation	High	NY uses 11th grade competency status to make accountability determinations for high schools. We are moving to a system of cohort analysis. The performance of students with disabilities is included (aggregated) in such determinations. Also, spec. ed. Quality Assurance (monitoring) procedures heavily emphasize student perf. data, including participation and performance in state assessments.
Oklahoma	Planning	None	Recent legislation requires end of course tests. Beginning the planning and development of these tests.
Tennessee	Development	High	EOC tests in development—special ed. has concerns with obtaining regular education diploma.
Texas	Implementation	High	Students with disabilities who take the course with no content modifications are included in the assessments.
Utah	Implementation	High	End of level tests for k-6 in language arts, math and science. Math and science for some courses grades 7-12. By 2003, Language Arts and Math will be developed for all grades and courses K-12.
West Virginia	Development	Low	Currently looking at end-of-course test for Algebra I only.

Aggregating results of alternate assessment with general assessment results

State	State's Level of Activity	Special Education's Involvement	Description of activity
California	Implementation	Low	Aggregation is automatic for students who participate.
Florida	Planning	Very High	Pilot studies are underway to review reliability and audit teacher decision-making. Multiple means of alternate assessment are currently being used. Planning in this area continues.
Kentucky	Implementation	Very High	Reports include the results of alternate assessment in the aggregate as an equal weight as non-disabled students.
Idaho	Implementation	Very High	Scores appear identical and will be aggregated and disaggregated.
Missouri	Considered but Rejected	High	At this time we do not plan to aggregate the results with the MAP assessments. We will use the MAP-Alternate results somehow in the accountability system. Not sure how we will do that yet.
North Dakota	Planning	Some	Task Force reviewing this issue.
New York	Considered but Rejected	High	We will not aggregate results from these very different measures.
Oklahoma	Planning	Very High	There is discussion of how these results will be reported after July 1, 2000.
Tennessee	Development	Very High	Alternate assessment developed to mirror reporting language of statewide assessment.
Texas	Planning	High	Texas is studying valid methodology and statistical design to address this issue.
Utah	Considered but Rejected	Very High	AA results are not expected to be compatible with results of general state assessments and therefore cannot be aggregated. Still in development so no firm decision has been made.
Vermont	Planning	Very High	Developing a system.
Wisconsin	Implementation	High	Students who participate in alternate assessment will be reported in a fifth proficiency level beginning with the 1999-2000 school year.
West Virginia	Planning	High	Examining reporting alternate assessment results across 4 performance levels - not percentiles.
Wyoming	Considered but Rejected		For reporting purposes the State does not aggregate due to statistical reasons. For accountability purposes alternate assessment will count.

Other areas of reform

State	State's Level of Activity	Special Education's Involvement	Description of Activity
Arkansas	Development	Some	New Outcome Based Licensure System
Colorado	----	----	(1) Each district will develop a contract specifying how all students will meet standards. (2) The report form will include alternate assessment results—not aggregated. (3) The state will also try to look at "Safe & Civil Learning Environment" as an accreditation indicator.
Florida	Planning	Very High	School Achievement level determination for special schools (juvenile justice facilities, special center schools; alternative schools): Addressing accountability for special schools and investigating accountability for special education in multiple ways—not just through test scores.
Idaho	Development	Very High	Accountability for demonstrating progress toward Special Education Performance Goals and Indicators: Includes: Decreasing dropout rates, increasing graduation rates, participation of all students in district and statewide assessments, improving academic skills of students in special education, improving post-school outcomes for special education student.
Massachusetts	Planning	High	Alternate graduation options: Discussing is more like it - we have not reached the planning stage yet.
New Mexico	Planning	Some	We are still trying to establish a single system based on cohort groups in schools.
Tennessee	Implementation	Very High	Special accommodations for students in special education. Training on-going.
Utah	Development	Low	Stanford 9 will be increased to include grade 3 by 2003.

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